55 Phrasal verbs

Some verbs in English have two or more words in them, and usually have a new meaning when they are used together. These are called phrasal verbs.

See also: Verb patterns with objects 53 Prepositions 105 Separable phrasal verbs R20 Inseparable phrasal verbs R21

55.1 PHRASAL VERBS

Phrasal verbs have a verb plus one or more particles (prepositions or adverbs.) The particle often changes the usual meaning of the verb.





HOW TO FORM

The particle always comes after the verb. The verb changes form to match the subject as usual. The particle never changes form.







Negatives are formed in the usual way.



This is wrong. The particle should come after the verb.

FURTHER EXAMPLES

You work out at the gym.



should never change.

My cat sometimes runs away.



They don't eat out very often.



Do you always turn up late?

Ouestions are formed in the usual wav.



She chills out in the evening.



We can check into the hotel now.

He doesn't go out when he's tired.



Do they meet up most weekends?



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55.2 PHRASAL VERBS IN DIFFERENT TENSES

When phrasal verbs are used in different tenses, the verb changes, but the particle remains the same.

never changes.



PRESENT SIMPLE WOT

I work out every week.

PAST SIMPLE | Worked

I worked out yesterday.

PRESENT CONTINUOUS am worki

I am working out right now.

FUTURE WITH "WILL" | WILL WOR

I will work out tomorrow.

FURTHER EXAMPLES



I cleaned up the kitchen last night.



The particle

Their car is always breaking down.



I think we're lost! We should have looked up the route.



She doesn't dress up very often.



You should go over your answers again.



I am counting on Rajiv to give the presentation next week.



I can't believe she turned down the job.



I met up with my friends last weekend.



I'm still getting over the flu.



When will they grow up?

55.3 SEPARABLE PHRASAL VERBS

If a phrasal verb has a direct object, it can sometimes go between the verb and the particle. Phrasal verbs that do this are called "separable" phrasal verbs.

He is picking up litter.

He is picking litter up.

The object can also go between the verb and the particle.

He is picking it up.

FURTHER EXAMPLES

I turned on the light.



I turned the light on.

Can you pick up that box?



Can you pick that box up?

The object can go after the particle.

You should throw away those old shoes.



You should throw those old shoes away.

I was annoyed because he woke up the baby.



I was annoyed because he woke her up.

I always fill up the water jug when it's empty.



I always fill it up when it's empty.

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COMMON MISTAKES SEPARABLE PHRASAL VERBS

If the direct object of a separable phrasal verb is a pronoun, it must go between the verb and the particle.



The pronoun cannot go at the end of the sentence.

He picked up it.

INSEPARABLE PHRASAL VERBS 55.4

Some phrasal verbs cannot be separated. The object must always come after the particle; it can never sit between the particle and the verb. This is true whether the object is a noun or a pronoun.



The verb and the particle must stay together.

We had to run to get on the train.



We had to run to get the train on. 😢



This is wrong. The object can't sit between the verb and the particle.

FURTHER EXAMPLES

I need to go over my notes.



I ran into her at the supermarket.



Susan really takes after her father, they're very similar.



Drop by the house any time you like.



I've come across a new recipe.



He sleeps in most Saturdays.



I'm taking care of my sister's children tonight.



They will have to do without a trip this summer.



It's great to hear from you!



Get on this bus for the beach.



Caterpillars turn into butterflies.



Get off that bicycle if you don't have a helmet.



He has fallen behind the rest of the class this year.

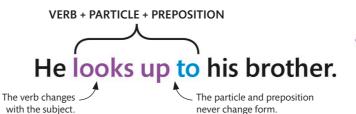


I am looking into visiting somewhere warm.



55.5 THREE-WORD PHRASAL VERBS

Three-word phrasal verbs have a verb, a particle, and a preposition. The particle and preposition often change the usual meaning of the verb.





Most, but not all,

three-word phrasal verbs are inseparable.

INTONATION

In spoken English, the stress is on the middle word of a three-word phrasal verb.

look up to get along with look forward to

FURTHER EXAMPLES



We have run out of coffee, so I'll get some more.



You're walking too fast, I can't keep up with you.



I must have dropped my keys when I was getting out of the car.

55.6 "GET BACK FROM"

"Get back from" can be separable or inseparable depending on the context.

When "get back from" means "to return from," it is always **inseparable**.

When "get back from" means "to retrieve from" it is **separable**. The object must go between "get" and "back."

I got back from Italy yesterday



I need to get the lawn mower back from Tina.



55.7 NOUNS BASED ON PHRASAL VERBS

Some nouns are made from phrasal verbs, often formed by joining the verb and the particle together. When these words are spoken, the stress is usually on the verb.



The teacher asked me to hand out the exam papers.



The teacher gave us a handout for the lesson.



Particle

Sometimes, the noun is formed by putting the particle in front of the verb. In these cases, the spoken stress is usually on the particle.



Oh no! It was sunny and now it's pouring down.



We have a rainy season with daily downpours.

Stress is on the first syllable.

FURTHER EXAMPLES

The company is trying to cut back on staff expenses.



Not another <u>cut</u>back! The company must be in serious trouble.

It's a shame that he wants to drop out of school.



We've had a surprisingly high percentage of dropouts in the class.

We want to get away and go somewhere sunny this winter.



A trip to Australia sounds like a fabulous getaway.